



Blueberry



History

Blueberries are native to North America. Native Americans were eating wild blueberries long before European settlers came to the United States. Native American tribes used blueberries for food, medicine, and dye for baskets and cloth. The Wampanoag Indians taught the Pilgrims about native crops including blueberries. Pilgrims were taught to gather berries in the summer and dry them for storage.

When Lewis and Clark explored the Northwest Territory, they discovered that Native Americans smoked wild blueberries to preserve them for the winter. They also consumed a jerky that was made with dried blueberries and meat.

Today, 95% of the world's blueberry crop is grown in North America. The US and Canada produce 200,000,000 pounds of blueberries throughout the year.

Language Lesson

Arandano – Spanish
Myrtille – French
Mirtillo – Italian
Heidelbeere – German
Blåbär – Swedish
Blåbær – Norwegian
Việt quất – Vietnamese

Fun facts

- Blueberries grow in clusters on bushes but don't ripen at the same time
- Blueberries are also called star berries
- Wild blueberries grow on low bushes and are smaller than farmed blueberries
- There are over 50 varieties of blueberries
- Blueberries can be harvested by gently shaking a bush and catching the falling berries
- It takes 2-5 weeks for blueberries to ripen on the bush
- Blueberries don't ripen after they have been picked
- Blueberries can grow mold in 12 hours after being picked if they are not stored in a dry, cool place
- Blueberries have more heart-healthy antioxidants than most other foods
- July is Blueberry Month



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